

Sirens wailed across the southern half of Cyprus today, in memory of the day known as “black anniversary” among the Greek Cypriots. Cypriot leaders, on both sides of the divide, must take forward steps to wash away the darkness of this day and replace it with peace and tolerance.●

REMEMBERING GENERAL WAYNE A. DOWNING

● Mr. REED. Mr. President, today, with a heavy heart, I recognize an American patriot and public servant who passed away on July 17, 2007: GEN Wayne A. Downing, U.S. Army, Retired.

Born on May 10, 1940, in Peoria, IL, General Downing graduated from the Spalding Institute in 1958 and was then appointed to the U.S. Military Academy. Following his graduation from West Point in 1962, General Downing served two combat tours in Vietnam as a junior infantry officer.

General Downing served his country for 34 years in a variety of command assignments in infantry, armored, special operations, and joint units, culminating in his appointment as the commander-in-chief of the U.S. Special Operations Command. As a general officer, he commanded the special operations of all services during the 1989 invasion of Panama and commanded a joint special operations task force operating deep behind the Iraqi lines during Operation Desert Storm.

General Downing's reputation was that of a smart, decisive, forceful, and caring leader, known in particular for his unwavering determination to accomplish any mission assigned and provide his soldiers the best possible support. His personal courage and leadership by example inspired fierce loyalty from all the soldiers who worked for him.

Following his retirement from the U.S. Army in 1996, General Downing had repeatedly answered the call of public service. After the terrorist attack on the U.S. base at Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, he was appointed by President Clinton to assess the attack and to make recommendations on how to protect Americans and U.S. facilities worldwide from future attacks.

From 1999–2000, General Downing was a member of the congressionally mandated National Commission on Terrorism charged with examining the terrorist threat to the U.S., evaluating America's laws, policies, and practices for preventing and punishing terrorism directed at U.S. citizens, and recommending corrective actions.

In the wake of 9/11, General Downing served for almost a year in the White House as national director and deputy national security advisor for combating terrorism. As the President's principal advisor on matters related to combating terrorism, he was responsible for coordinating the military, diplomatic, intelligence, law enforcement, information, and financial operations

of our war on terror, and for developing and executing a strategy that integrated all elements of national power.

Following his assignment at the White House, General Downing returned to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point when he assumed the position of “Distinguished Chair” of the Combating Terrorism Center, CTC. Under his leadership, the center sought to better understand foreign and domestic terrorism threats, to educate future leaders, and to provide political analysis and advice to counter future terrorist activities.

In addition to his duties at the CTC, General Downing was a visiting faculty member at the University of Michigan Business School conducting seminars on leadership and transformation management and was military and terrorism analyst for NBC News.

General Downing's career has epitomized the phrase “lifetime of service to the Nation” and exemplified ideals inherent in duty, honor, and country. He was a true warrior who always spoke the truth, insisted on complete honesty from all he worked with, and was the epitome of honorable behavior. As a combat leader, educator, global strategist, and national security expert, General Downing's contributions to our national defense and security are immeasurable.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Kathryn, his daughters Laura and Elizabeth, and the entire Downing family in this time of sorrow. He will be missed dearly by his many friends, colleagues, and an extremely grateful Nation.●

TRIBUTE TO JULIE SITTASON

● Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to Julie Sittason, who has dedicated over 20 years of her life to caring for others. On August 16, 2007, when Julie steps down as the executive director of Hospice of West Alabama, she will leave behind a legacy of service to others.

Julie and I have been friends for many years. She graduated from my alma mater, the University of Alabama, with an undergraduate degree in sociology and a master's degree in counseling and guidance from the University of Alabama. Soon after, Julie decided to pursue a rewarding career of serving and caring for others.

For 7 years, Julie worked as a counselor at the Alabama State Department of Industrial Relations, providing guidance to the blind, the hearing impaired and recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Later, Julie returned to the University of Alabama to work as the program administrator for the West Alabama Comprehensive Services program.

In 1986, Julie was named executive director of Hospice of West Alabama. When she was hired, the Agency only employed three full-time staffers, operating on an annual budget of \$86,000. Today, the budget has grown to \$5 mil-

lion a year and Hospice of West Alabama has 70 employees, serving 600 patients a year in Tuscaloosa, Greene, Hale, Bibb and Pickens Counties.

Over the past two decades, Julie has overseen many changes at Hospice of West Alabama. It was under her direction in 1997 when the Agency became the first community-based hospice in the State of Alabama to be officially recognized by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. In 2004, it was Julie's vision that led to the construction of the \$5 million facility that includes the State's first community-based inpatient hospice facility.

While many people think that the service Julie contributes each day through her work at Hospice of West Alabama is enough, she thinks otherwise. As an avid volunteer, Julie continues to serve with organizations such as the March of Dimes, the MS Walkathon and Soup Bowl. She has served as an adviser for Alpha Omicron Pi Sorority, is on the administrative board for First United Methodist Church, and the board of directors for United Cerebral Palsy, Castle Hill Clinic and the Maude Whatley Clinic. Julie has also held several leadership positions in the Alabama Hospice Organization.

Julie is married to Chuck Sittason. She has two daughters, Katherine Cramer, who served with distinction as my first Senate page in 1995, and Meredith Cramer.

As Julie embarks on another phase in her life, she will remain an inspiration to many and will be remembered for her dedication and many contributions to Hospice of West Alabama. I wish her much luck in her future endeavors, and I ask this entire Senate to join me in recognizing and honoring the life and career of my good friend Julie Sittason.●

RECOGNIZING THE 114TH FIGHTER WING

● Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize the 114th Fighter Wing of the South Dakota Air National Guard for being awarded the 2007 Outstanding Air National Guard Flying Unit Award.

Since 1956, the 114th Fighter Wing has been an outstanding unit and has played an important role in the South Dakota National Guard. The unit has a proud history of accomplishment and this award is in keeping with that tradition. Over the years, the 114th has received numerous unit citations such as the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award and the Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamer for combat duty as a part of Operation Just Cause in Panama. The 114th Fighter Wing has trained with the Navy, Marines, and the Air Force during Operation Provide Comfort II in Turkey, Commando Sling in Singapore, Operation Southern Watch in Al Jaber, Kuwait, and numerous others. Today, the unit is continuing to uphold its